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NAACP leader calls Lick's remarks racist

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — A black leader proposed Tuesday that the University of Maine offer sensitivity training in race relations following the uproar over its president's remarks about athletic prowess among blacks.

Gerald Talbot, former state legislator and longtime head of the Portland chapter of the NAACP, also urged the university to promote and encourage black student recruitment by offering scholarships "outside the sports arena."

Talbot said he believes President Dale W. Lick's statement last week that the muscle structure of blacks makes them better suited to some positions in football and basketball was cause for his resignation.

"I do not consider Mr. Lick a racist. I do, however, consider his statements to be of a racist nature," Talbot said in a prepared statement.

Lick was out of state and could not be reached for comment.

Talbot urged university trustees to arrange a sensitivity training workshop in race relations for staff and administrators. The workshop, to be held once or twice a year, would focus on minority-related issues.

Kent Price, spokesman for the statewide university system, said the university holds workshops designed to make its employees aware of the problem of sexual harassment.

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● NAACP

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"There has not been, to my knowledge, a similar sort of thing on racial or ethnic sensitivity, but there's no reason I know of why there should not be," Price said.

University Chancellor Robert L. Woodbury plans a special meeting of the board of trustees Thursday in Gorham to consider what actions the university can take in the wake of the Lick controversy "to turn an unfortunate incident into a positive one."